

Skagit County Conservation Futures Program Advisory Committee
Meeting Summary
January 8, 2019

Members in Attendance

Steve Sakuma	Andrea Xaver	Scott DeGraw	Keith Morrison
Jim Glackin	Owen Peth	Wendy Pare	

Members Absent

None

Staff and Others in Attendance

Kara Symonds, Skagit County Public Works
Tara Naylor, Skagit County Public Works

Scott called the meeting to order at 7:00 AM

Member Update

The group discussed a recent article in the Skagit Valley Herald regarding up and coming farmers searching for land. This led to an overall conversation on changing demographics and economics of farming on the landscape. Scott shared some lessons learned from the Sammamish Valley. Keith talked about how it comes back to zoning. The group discussed looking at a map of Agricultural Reserve zoning and looking at what that is currently zoned as some farmers are looking for small acreage to enter in the market.

December Meeting Summary

Andrea moved to approve the 12/11/18 meeting summary; Jim seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

SPF Study

Kara invited SPF to present their study of farmland outside of ag zoning at the February meeting. Allen Rozema will be in attendance to share insights from their research. He'll be on the agenda at 8:00 a.m.

FLP Contractors

Northwest Real Estate Valuation provides appraisals for the program and we'll be under contract again through the end of 2020. The group reviewed a draft Request for Qualifications to seek a monitoring agent for the 2019-2020 seasons. The RFQ will be put in the newspaper and daily journal. The RFQ will ask for submittals by the end of February, so the group can review them during the March meeting.

Property Update/Financial Summary

The group discussed FLP 199 and the proposed Ducks Unlimited project on the property. The group expressed concern with impacting drainage to adjacent properties. There were questions around what specifically the borrow areas on the map meant and the ultimate farm plans for the property. Kara will research the questions and report back to the group.

The group discussed the recent Capital Press article on elk damage to agricultural land. Kara will invite Dave Thomas, Skagit County's Assessor, to the March meeting. Dave can update the group on both the elk damage survey and the open space audit of properties.

The group reviewed the Program's fund balance and a list of properties in the queue. The current applicant list includes 1,500 acres and 33 development rights.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 AM